IN THE CLAIMS

1.   (currently amended) A terminal device, comprising:

display means;

mediating means; and

authentication-information transmitting means;

the display means having (i) a display function for displaying electronic information provided through a network so that a user can browse the information, (ii) a specifying-information receiving function for receiving specifying information for specifying the mediating means, and (iii) a specifying function for specifying the mediating means using the received specifying information;

the mediating means being operable to start the authentication-information transmitting means when specified by the specifying function; and

the authentication-information transmitting means being operable to transmit device-authentication information to an authentication server,

a network location of the authentication server being received by the display means as part of an EMBED tag which specifies a plug-in from among a plurality of plug-ins of the terminal device, each of the plug-ins of the terminal device being configured to <u>use common authentication information as an</u> authentication function to start authentication—by a same authentication function, to be started at the terminal device and which specifies the address of a site to be accessed by the terminal device when device authentication is successfully done and the address of a site to be accessed by the terminal device when authentication cannot be done.

2.   (previously presented) The terminal device according to Claim 1, further comprising:

authentication-result receiving means for receiving an authentication result from the authentication server;

authentication-result transmitting means for transmitting the received authentication result to a providing server operable to provide electronic information; and

electronic-information receiving means for receiving the electronic information transmitted from the providing server based on the transmitted authentication result.

3.   (previously presented) The terminal device according to Claim 2, wherein the mediating means has a using function for using the electronic information received from the providing server.

4.   (previously presented) The terminal device according to Claim 2, further comprising:

requesting means for sending a request for the electronic information to the providing server,

wherein the specifying-information receiving function receives the specifying information transmitted from the providing server based on the request for electronic information.

5.   (canceled)

6.   (previously presented) The terminal device according to Claim 1, wherein the device-authentication information is transmitted to a plurality of authentication servers, network locations of the respective authentication servers are received by the display means, and the network locations are ranked in an access precedence order.

7.   (previously presented) The terminal device according to Claim 2, wherein

the specifying-information receiving function receives the specifying information including access information used to access the providing server, and

the authentication-result transmitting means accesses the providing server using the received access information.

8.   (currently amended) A providing server for providing electronic information to a terminal device, the terminal device including display means, mediating means and authentication-information transmitting means, the providing server comprising:

specifying-information   transmitting   means   for transmitting specifying information to the display means of the terminal device for specifying the mediating means;

authentication-result receiving means for receiving an authentication result from the terminal device; and

electronic-information   transmitting   means   for transmitting electronic information to the terminal device based on the received authentication result,

authentication being performed by an authentication server, and a network location of the authentication server being received by the display means as part of an EMBED tag which specifies a plug-in from among a plurality of plug-ins of the terminal device, each of the plug-ins of the terminal device being configured to use common authentication information as an authentication   function   to   start   authentication ~~by   a   same authentication   function~~, to be started at the terminal device and which specifies the address of a site to be accessed by the terminal device when device authentication is successfully done and the address of a site to be accessed by the terminal device when authentication cannot be done.

9.   (currently   amended)   A   method   of   using   electronic information in a computer having display means, mediating means, and authentication-information transmitting means, the method comprising:

displaying electronic information provided through a network so that a user can browse the information;

receiving specifying information for specifying the mediating means;

specifying the mediating means using the received specifying information;

starting the authentication-information transmitting means when the mediating means is specified; and

transmitting device-authentication information to an authentication server when the authentication-information transmitting means is started,

a network location of the authentication server being received by the display means as part of an EMBED tag which specifies a plug-in from among a plurality of plug-ins of the computer, each of the plug-ins of the computer being configured to use common authentication information as an authentication function to start authentication ~~by a same authentication function~~, to be started at the computer and which specifies the address of a site to be accessed by the computer when device authentication is successfully done and the address of a site to be accessed by the computer when authentication cannot be done.

10. (currently amended) A method of providing electronic information from a providing server to a terminal device, the providing server including specifying-information transmitting means, authentication-result receiving means, and electronic-information transmitting means; and the terminal device including display means, mediating means, and authentication-information transmitting means, the method comprising:

5

transmitting specifying information for specifying the mediating means from the specifying-information transmitting means to the display means of the terminal device, the mediating means using the specifying information to start the authentication-information transmitting means;

receiving in the authentication-result receiving means an authentication result sent from the terminal device; and

transmitting electronic information from the electronic-information transmitting means to the terminal device based on the received authentication result,

authentication being performed by an authentication server, and a network location of the authentication server being received by the display means as part of an EMBED tag which specifies a plug-in from among a plurality of plug-ins of the terminal device, each of the plug-ins of the terminal device being configured to use common authentication information as an authentication function to start authentication ~~by a same authentication function~~, to be started at the terminal device and which specifies the address of a site to be accessed by the terminal device when device authentication is successfully done and the address of a site to be accessed by the terminal device when authentication cannot be done.

11.   (canceled)

12.   (canceled)

13.   (currently amended) A computer-readable non-transitory storage medium recorded with a program for causing a computer to execute a method of processing information, the computer being operable to perform a display function, a mediating function and an authentication-information transmitting function, the method comprising:

displaying electronic information provided through a network so that a user can browse the information;

receiving specifying information for specifying the mediating function;

specifying the mediating function using the received specifying information;

starting the authentication-information transmitting function when the mediating function is specified; and

transmitting device-authentication information to an authentication server when the authentication-information transmitting function is started,

authentication being performed by an authentication server, and a network location of the authentication server being received by the computer as part of an EMBED tag which specifies a plug-in from among a plurality of plug-ins of the computer, each of the plug-ins of the computer being configured to use common authentication information as an authentication function to start authentication ~~by a same authentication function~~, to be started at the computer and which specifies the address of a site to be accessed by the computer when device authentication is successfully done and the address of a site to be accessed by the computer when authentication cannot be done.

14. (currently amended) A computer-readable non-transitory storage medium recorded with a program for causing a computer to execute a method of providing electronic information to a terminal device, the terminal device being operable to perform a display function, a mediating function and an authorization-information transmitting function, the method comprising:

transmitting specifying information to the terminal device, the specifying information being used by the display function of the terminal device for specifying the mediating function, and the mediating function starting the

7

authentication-information transmitting function when the mediating function is specified;

receiving an authentication result from the terminal device; and

transmitting electronic information to the terminal device based on the received authentication result,

a network location of the authentication server being received by the terminal device part of an EMBED tag which specifies a plug-in from among a plurality of plug-ins of the terminal device, each of the plug-ins being configured to use common authentication information as an authentication function to start authentication by a same authentication function, to be started at the terminal device and which specifies the address of a site to be accessed by the terminal device when device authentication is successfully done and the address of a site to be accessed by the terminal device when authentication cannot be done.

15. (currently amended) A terminal device, comprising:
information communication means;
electronic-information using means; and
authentication-information management means;

the information communication means having (i) a function for receiving authentication-trigger information required for using electronic information provided through a network, (ii) a function for analyzing specifying information for specifying the electronic-information using means based on the authentication-trigger information, and (iii) a specifying function for specifying the electronic-information using means based on the specifying information;

the electronic-information using means being operable to start the authentication-information management means when specified by the specifying function; and

the authentication-information management means   being
operable to read device-authentication information, and to
transmit   the   device-authentication   information   to   an
authentication server,

a network location of the authentication server being
received by the information communication means as part of an
EMBED tag which specifies a plug-in from among a plurality of
plug-ins of the terminal device, each of the plug-ins of the
terminal device being configured to use common authentication
information   as   an   authentication   function   to   start
authentication ~~by a same authentication function~~, to be started
at the terminal device and which specifies the address of a site
to be accessed by the terminal device when device authentication
is successfully done and the address of a site to be accessed by
the terminal device when authentication cannot be done.

16.   (previously presented) The terminal device according
to Claim 15, wherein

the   authentication-information   management   means
receives   an   authentication   result   from   the   authentication
server,

the electronic-information using means transmits the
authentication result to a providing server operable to provide
the electronic information, and

the   information   communication   means   receives   the
electronic information transmitted from the providing server
based on the transmitted authentication result.

17.   (previously presented) The terminal device according
to Claim 16, wherein the electronic-information using means has
a using function for using the electronic information received
from the providing server.

9

18. (previously presented) The terminal device according to Claim 17, wherein the electronic-information using means is operable to enable a user to browse the electronic information, to play back electronic information as music content, or to play back electronic information as moving-picture content.

19. (canceled)

20. (previously presented) The terminal device according to Claim 15, wherein the device-authentication information is transmitted to a plurality of authentication servers, network locations of the respective authentication servers are received by the information communication means, and the network locations are ranked in an access precedence order.

21. (previously presented) The terminal device according to Claim 16, wherein

the authentication-trigger information includes providing-server access information used to access the providing server, and

the authentication result is transmitted to the providing server using the providing-server access information.

22. (currently amended) A providing server for providing electronic information requiring authentication to a terminal device, the providing server comprising:

authentication-trigger-information transmitting means for transmitting, to the terminal device, authentication-trigger information including specifying information for specifying electronic-information using means;

authentication-result receiving means for receiving an authentication result from the terminal device; and

electronic-information providing means for providing the electronic information to the terminal device based on the received authentication result,

authentication being performed by an authentication server, and a network location of the authentication server being received by the terminal device as part of an EMBED tag which specifies a plug-in from among a plurality of plug-ins of the terminal device, each of the plug-ins of the terminal device being configured to use common authentication information as an authentication function to start authentication by a same authentication function, to be started at the terminal device and which specifies the address of a site to be accessed by the terminal device when device authentication is successfully done and the address of a site to be accessed by the terminal device when authentication cannot be done.

23. (currently amended) A method of using electronic information in a terminal device having information communication means, electronic-information using means, and authentication-information management means, the method comprising:

receiving authentication-trigger information required for using the electronic information provided through a network;

analyzing specifying information for specifying the electronic-information using means based on the authentication-trigger information;

specifying the electronic-information using means based on the specifying information;

starting the authentication-information management means when specified by the specifying function; and

reading device-authentication information and transmitting the device-authentication information to an authentication server,

11

a network location of the authentication server being received by the information communication means as part of an EMBED tag which specifies a plug-in from among a plurality of plug-ins of the terminal device, each of the plug-ins of the terminal device being configured to use common authentication information as an authentication function to start authentication ~~by a same authentication function~~, to be started at the terminal device and which specifies the address of a site to be accessed by the terminal device when device authentication is successfully done and the address of a site to be accessed by the terminal device when authentication cannot be done.

24. (previously presented) The method of using the electronic information according to Claim 23, further comprising:

receiving in the authentication-information management means an authentication result from the authentication server;

transmitting the authentication result from the authentication-information management means to a providing server for providing the electronic information; and

receiving in the information communication means the electronic information transmitted from the providing server based on the authentication result.

25. (previously presented) The method of using the electronic information according to Claim 24, further comprising:

using the electronic information received from the providing server in the electronic information using means.

26. (previously presented) The method of using the electronic information according to Claim 25, wherein the electronic-information using means is operable to enable a user

12

to browse the electronic information, to play back the electronic information as music content, or to play back the electronic information as moving-picture content.

27. (canceled).

28. (previously presented) The method of using the electronic information according to Claim 23, wherein the device-authentication information is transmitted to a plurality of authentication servers, network locations of the respective authentication servers are received by the information communication means, and the network locations are ranked in an access precedence order.

29. (previously presented) The method of using the electronic information according to Claim 24, wherein

the authentication-trigger information includes providing-server access information used to access the providing server, and the step of transmitting the authentication result includes transmitting the authentication result from the authentication-information management means to the providing server using the providing-server access information.

30. (currently amended) A method of providing electronic information requiring authentication from a providing server to a terminal device, the method comprising:

transmitting from the providing server to the terminal device authentication-trigger information including specifying information for specifying electronic-information using means;

receiving from the terminal device an authentication result for the terminal device; and

providing the electronic information to the terminal device based on the received authentication result,

13

authentication being performed by an authentication server, and a network location of the authentication server being received by the terminal device as part of an EMBED tag which specifies a plug-in from among a plurality of plug-ins of the terminal device, each of the plug-ins of the terminal device being configured to <u>use common authentication information as an authentication function to start</u> authentication ~~by a same authentication function~~, to be started at the terminal device and which specifies the address of a site to be accessed by the terminal device when device authentication is successfully done and the address of a site to be accessed by the terminal device when authentication cannot be done.

31. (currently amended) A non-transitory recording medium recorded with a program for causing a computer to execute a method of processing information, the computer being operable to perform an information communication function, an electronic-information using function, and an authentication-information management function, the method comprising:

pursuant to the information communication function, (i) receiving authentication-trigger information required for using electronic information provided through a network, (ii) analyzing specifying information for specifying the electronic-information using function based on the authentication-trigger information, and (iii) specifying the electronic information using function based on the specifying information;

pursuant to the electronic-information using function, starting the authentication-information management function; and

pursuant to the authentication-information management function, reading device-authentication information and transmitting the device-authentication information to an authentication server,

a network location of the authentication server being received by the computer as part of an EMBED tag which specifies a plug-in from among a plurality of plug-ins of the computer, each of the plug-ins of the computer configured to use common authentication information as an authentication function to start authentication ~~by a same authentication function~~, to be started at the computer and which specifies the address of a site to be accessed by the computer when device authentication is successfully done and the address of a site to be accessed by the computer when authentication cannot be done.

32.   (previously presented) The recording medium according to Claim 31, wherein the information processing method further comprises:

receiving   an   authentication   result   from   the authentication server;

transmitting the received authentication result to a providing server for providing the electronic information; and

receiving the electronic information transmitted from the providing server based on the transmitted authentication result.

33.   (previously presented) The recording medium according to Claim 31, wherein the information processing method further comprises,   pursuant   to   the   electronic-information   using function,   using   the   electronic   information   received   from   the providing server.

34.   (previously presented) The recording medium according to Claim 33, wherein the information processing method further comprises,   pursuant   to   the   electronic-information   using function, enabling a user to browse the electronic information, playing back the electronic information as music content, or

15

playing back the electronic information as moving-picture content.

35.   (canceled)

36.   (previously presented) The recording medium according to Claim 31, wherein the device-authentication information is transmitted to a plurality of authentication servers, network locations of the respective authentication servers are received by the computer, and the network locations are ranked in an access precedence order.

37.   (previously presented) The recording medium according to Claim 32, wherein the authentication-trigger information includes providing-server access information used to access the providing server, and the step of transmitting the authentication result includes transmitting the authentication result to the providing server using the providing-server access information.

38.   (currently amended) A recording medium recorded with a program for causing a computer to execute a method of providing electronic information requiring authentication from a providing server to a terminal device, the method comprising:
        transmitting from the providing server to the terminal device authentication-trigger information including specifying information for specifying electronic-information using means;
        receiving from the terminal device an authentication result for the terminal device; and
        providing the electronic information to the terminal device based on the received authentication result,
        authentication being performed by an authentication server, and a network location of the authentication server

16

being received by the terminal device as part of an EMBED tag which specifies a plug-in from among a plurality of plug-ins of the terminal device, each of the plug-ins of the terminal device being configured to <u>use common authentication information as an authentication function to start</u> authentication ~~by a same authentication function~~, to be started at the terminal device and which specifies the address of a site to be accessed by the terminal device when device authentication is successfully done and the address of a site to be accessed by the terminal device when authentication cannot be done.